



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE



Disability Resource Centre:
Support and advice for disabled students

About the Disability Resource Centre

The Disability Resource Centre (DRC) provides a confidential, professional and accessible service for disabled students and those staff supporting them. The objectives of the DRC are to:

- provide advice and guidance for prospective and current disabled students to enable them to access a wide range of services
- work with Colleges and Faculties/Departments to develop and implement support programmes for disabled students to ensure equal opportunity, access and attainment
- provide advice, guidance and training for University and College staff in meeting their duties to disabled students within the context of disability equality legislation

Further information

www.cam.ac.uk/disability/

DRC statistics

www.cam.ac.uk/disability-statistics/



The DRC supports students with any impairment/disability, medical condition or injury, including those with:

- specific learning difficulties (SpLDs), including dyslexia and dyspraxia
- physical/mobility impairments and injuries (including wheelchair users, Upper Limb Disorder/RSI)
- sensory impairments (including hearing impairment, visual impairment)
- mental health difficulties (including depression, schizophrenia, anxiety disorder)
- long standing illnesses/health conditions (including cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, HIV, diabetes, epilepsy)
- Asperger syndrome and autism

Visit the Undergraduate Study website to find out more and watch our series of short films featuring current disabled students. The films provide information about the application process to and support available at Cambridge.

Further information

www.study.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/disability/

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There are hundreds of ways that disabled students are supported at Cambridge, and the DRC does a fantastic job of co-ordinating it all so that each and every student gets the assistance they need to get the most out of their university experience.

Caroline, Medicine



Financial support

There are a variety of sources of financial support available for disabled students – both from the government and from the University. These include:

- Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) – government funding to help with extra costs UK students may face as the direct result of an impairment, health condition or specific learning difficulty
- International Disabled Students' Fund – administered by the DRC, to help meet the academic-related disability support requirements of EU and international disabled students (to mirror support provided by DSAs)
- Disabled Students' Bursary Fund – administered by the DRC, to help meet the additional academic-related support requirements of UK, EU and international disabled students studying at the University

Eligibility and application processes for funding vary and can be time-consuming. Therefore, we encourage you to apply for funding as early as possible – our Disability Advisers at the DRC can answer your questions about funding and help you with your applications.

Further information

www.cam.ac.uk/disability-finance/

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The application for the International Disabled Students' Fund was very straightforward and I found the staff at the DRC extremely helpful.

Meg, Land Economy



Needs assessment

When your funding body has confirmed your eligibility for disability-related funding, eg Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs), they will write to you and request that you attend a Needs Assessment, also known as a Study Aids and Study Strategies Assessment.

This is a straightforward process. It isn't a diagnostic assessment and there aren't any tests – during the assessment you'll discuss your study needs and appropriate equipment will be demonstrated to you.

You'll have to go to a Needs Assessment Centre (also known as an Access Centre) for your assessment, and you'll need to make an appointment with them directly.

After your assessment, the Needs Assessor will write a report detailing the equipment and human support you require and send it to your funding body, which will then write to you to confirm what will be funded.

Further information

www.cam.ac.uk/disability-needs/



Equipment

Your funding body may award you a specialist equipment allowance to help you buy items you need to support you while at university. Equipment could include, for instance, a laptop, scanner/printer, digital recorder, or assistive technology, such as text to speech, speech to text or mind mapping software.

The allowance may also be used to pay for repairs, technical support, insurance or extended warranty costs arising from owning your equipment, as well as training on assistive technology software packages.

The DRC has a loan pool of equipment available to borrow so you can try out different options to see what works for you, or to use while awaiting the results of a funding application. We offer a range of ergonomic items, such as keyboards and mice, as well as laptops, digital recorders and more specialised equipment, for example for visually impaired students.

Further information

www.cam.ac.uk/disability-loan/

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The Disabled Students' Allowance has provided me with equipment which has enabled me to make the most of my time at Cambridge. This has included things like voice activated software, a dictaphone and mind mapping software, which have all been really helpful.

Jono, History



Visit the website to watch Jono's and other students' 60 Second Impressions (www.cam.ac.uk/60seconds/).

Human support

Your funding body may award you an allowance for Non-Medical Assistance (NMA) to help pay for support workers such as readers, sign language interpreters, note-takers, specialist one-to-one support, mentoring and/or other non-medical assistants you need to help you fully benefit from your course.



Further information
[www.cam.ac.uk/
disability-
humansupport/](http://www.cam.ac.uk/disability-humansupport/)

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I've found my mentoring support to be very beneficial. My weekly meetings with my mentor are very relaxed – we meet in a little café, drink hot chocolate and talk about literally anything. If I'm having a problem with something, just by talking it through with her I'm able to come up with simple solutions. This has had a massive impact on my work life and my independence.
Sophie, Natural Sciences



Visit the website to watch Sophie's and other students' 60 Second Impressions (www.cam.ac.uk/60seconds/).

Exam access arrangements

Examples of exam access arrangements include:

- extra time
- use of a word processor
- a separate room

If you're a prospective student who's intending to apply to the University, we strongly recommend that you indicate your disability in your UCAS application as this will allow us to make appropriate adjustments to the interview process, if required.

When studying here, access arrangements for exams at the University must be approved and organised by the Board of Examinations following receipt of an application from your College Tutorial Office. Applications must be supported by medical evidence or a full diagnostic report written by an Educational Psychologist or specialist teacher.

The recommendations for exam access arrangements, such as the amount of extra time requested, must be clearly and specifically stated in the medical evidence/ diagnostic report.

Further information

www.cam.ac.uk/disability-exam/



Further information

If you'd like to know more about applying to and studying at the University of Cambridge, visit the DRC and Undergraduate Study websites, where you'll find comprehensive information and a range of short films on a variety of topics. Should you have further questions, please get in touch using the details below.

Disability Resource Centre (DRC)

Keynes House
Trumpington Street
Cambridge CB2 1QA
01223 332301
disability@admin.cam.ac.uk
[**www.cam.ac.uk/disability/**](http://www.cam.ac.uk/disability/)

Cambridge Admissions Office

Fitzwilliam House
32 Trumpington Street
Cambridge CB2 1QY
01223 333308
admissions@cam.ac.uk
[**www.study.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/**](http://www.study.cam.ac.uk/undergraduate/)

The University Access Guide

The University Access Guide provides useful information on the accessibility of College and department buildings, and the University sites.
[**www.cam.ac.uk/accessguide/**](http://www.cam.ac.uk/accessguide/)

Other services

The DRC works closely with other student services, such as the Counselling Service, the Careers Service and the Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU) Student Advice Service. More information can be found on their individual websites.

Counselling Service
[**www.counselling.cam.ac.uk**](http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk)

Careers Service
[**www.careers.cam.ac.uk**](http://www.careers.cam.ac.uk)

CUSU Student Advice Service
[**www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk**](http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk)



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